

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in this application. By this Preliminary Amendment, the specification is amended. In particular, the brief descriptions of Figs. 4-10 in the "Brief Description of the Drawings" (corresponding to paragraphs [0016]-[0022] of the publication of this application) are amended for clarity and/or for consistency. No new matter is added.

In reply to the Election of Species Requirement, Applicant provisionally elects Species II, Fig. 8. At least claims 1-4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17 read on Species II. Also, as the Patent Office correctly recognized, claim 1 is generic to all species.

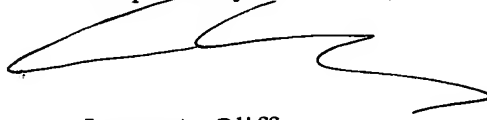
The above provisional election of species is made with traverse, as discussed below.

It seems that the Election of Species Requirement is simply dividing species I and II (Figs. 1-7 and 8) based on the assertion that the configuration shown in Fig. 8 is a modification of the whole configuration shown in Fig. 1. However, the imaging device shown in Fig. 8 is only a modification of the imaging device 3 shown in Fig. 1, and NOT a modification of the whole system. Thus, the Election of Species Requirement is improper.

It is also respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all species is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one Group of species would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining species. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Thus, withdrawal of the Election of Species Requirement is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Gang Luo
Registration No. 50,559

JAO:GXL/rle

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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